



HURON SHORES AREA PROGRESS REPORT – November 2023

RIDERSHIP – goal exceeded!

- 18,103 trip boardings by November 30; 2023 goal was 16,000 trips
- Year-over-year growth is 131%
- Expect to hit 20,000 boardings by December 31

OPERATIONS

1. Employee Shuttle - Ridership outstrips capacity

- Needed to continue Employee Shuttles on Saturdays and Sundays in November

2. Smart Cards

- December 1 – announced increase in price for Monthly Pass from \$60 to \$80
- New pricing takes effect February 1, 2024

3. Federal Transportation Infrastructure Grant

- Waiting to hear back on grant application for funding for bus shelters, solar lighting, benches, bike racks
- Working on grant application to purchase 3 new 20-person buses to replace current two buses and add a third bus to our system. Contract with Voyago would cover drivers only as we would supply buses. Estimate operational savings of \$20 per hour or about \$146k+ annually.

4. CT Program Grant

- Waiting to hear back
- Requested \$318,168. Money to be used for:
 - maintaining regular service levels and hours (fuel costs and contractor service rate increased)
 - maintaining forecast passenger trips (i.e. employee shuttles and summer bus),
 - support our Federal Grant submission (20% = \$74,867),
 - marketing (\$28,075).

5. Route 2 updates – our first Flex Stop

- Effective Monday, December 18 – using London Transit bus stop #1820 EB located at University Drive & Sunset Street as a FLEX STOP to enable HSAT passengers easier and closer access to the Megabus bus stop behind Elgin Hall Residence.
- Flex Stop request bookings from passengers by email/phone to Transit Coordinator at least 2 business days before trip and passed along to Voyago.
- Megabus provides long distance bus service from Western campus to Toronto, Kingston, Montreal etc.
- Announcement scheduled for December 15 on Facebook, website. Press release to go out same week.

6. Route 4 Updates / Follow through on report recommendations

- Added bus stop at Craigweil Gardens Senior Apartments in Ailsa Craig
- Added third return trip to enable passengers 8 hours in Strathroy and 6 hours in Grand Bend
- Bus leaves Sobeys at 8 pm, leaves Walmart in Strathroy at 9 pm, back at Sobeys at 9:54 pm
- Purchased/provided North Middlesex with brochure holders for bus stop poles
- Provided North Middlesex with updated brochures
- Mail drop updated brochure to all households in North Middlesex
- Developed “How to read a bus schedule” instructions; posted on Facebook and Website
- Outreach presentation to Ailsa Craig Seniors Club about HSAT and Route 4
- *Outstanding*: lowered bus stop signs to “eye-level” (dependent on North Middlesex Works Dept.)

7. Deployment of Used Shelters – 3 of the 8 used shelters from Stratford Transit

- Prioritized two shelters for KSPFN (Points Preference Plaza and Stony Point Community on Army Camp Road) and one for Sobeys Plaza, Grand Bend.
- Concrete pads prepped/poured week of November 27; need 2 weeks to cure
- Lambton Shores staff to install bus shelters
- Hoping for install before Christmas
- Submitted Lambton Creative County Grant application to cover cost of artwork commission from local Indigenous artist for the two KSPFN bus shelters

8. Presentation to Lambton County Council

- By County request, presented to County Council November 29 regarding development of Huron Shores Area Transit, successes, challenges/solutions, success factors, next steps
- Lambton County staff requested funds to complete feasibility study on public transit for Lambton County; Hoping to have research in place when provincial and federal grants re-open

MARKETING

1. Advertising / Promotion

- Due to lack of funds, marketing activity restricted to promotion of Route 4 changes (Facebook / Google Adwords)